

9-8-2009

Guest Artist Recital: ECOUTE

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ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

VISITING ARTISTS 2009-10

Norman Spivey presents:

ÉCOUTE:

pieces of Reynaldo Hahn
conceived and performed by Norman Spivey
written and directed by Susan Russell
music by Reynaldo Hahn and others

Hockett Family Recital Hall
Tuesday, September 8, 2009
8:15 p.m.

ITHACA

About the Show

This is about you. You have summoned Reynaldo, and over the next hour you and Hahn will wrestle with what it means to be an artist — and what it costs to love.

This original one-man show draws on Hahn's experiences and relationships, particularly those with his closest friends, the famous actress Sarah Bernhardt and the exceptional writer Marcel Proust (who in many ways acted as his greatest muse) — and celebrates the many inspirations of his music. The performance moves between text, music, and poetry to evoke not only a singular composer, but also an era when cultures were defined by their artists.

About Reynaldo Hahn

Reynaldo Hahn (1875-1947), an extraordinary French composer, pianist, singer, music critic, conductor, and impresario, has been called the musician of the Belle Époque. Earning this title was perhaps unlikely for a boy born in Venezuela to a father of German-Jewish heritage and a South American mother. When he was quite young the family relocated to Paris where his musical gifts blossomed. He entered the conservatoire at age 10, wrote many of his most enduring mélodies during his teen years, and became the darling of the salons (many of which were major centers of literature and music). Hahn met Proust at a salon, and the two were lifelong friends after a passionate affair. ("Everything I have ever done has always been thanks to Reynaldo," Proust once commented.) Among Hahn's writings are essays on the art of singing — *Du Chant* (On Singers and Singing), and a biography of his dear friend Sarah Bernhardt — *La Grande Sarah*.

Artist's Statement

I feel a bit of a kinship with Reynaldo Hahn. Even though I may not be the Renaissance man he was, living with this character has provided a window. I have long had an affinity for French art song — it has always seemed to fit my singing and temperament, and this show has been a way to combine my many interests in music and theatre. I don't know when I've been so stimulated by a project — or when I've been called on to take such artistic risks — but being decidedly outside of my comfort zone may be precisely why this has been such a wonderful creative journey.

This may be a one-man show, but it certainly has not been a one-man undertaking. I owe much to friends and colleagues in music, theatre, and beyond. This show is the realization of a long-envisioned idea. I look forward to sharing it with you. Special thanks to: Bill Schroder, Ted Christopher, Arlene Shrut, and Jane Ridley.

Funding for the commission, production, and touring of this project has come from the College of Arts and Architecture, the Institute for the Arts and Humanities, and the School of Music at Penn State.

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